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ABSTRACT

In this monograph the responsibilities of teacher education programs in dealing with the problems of sexism and racism are discussed. In a collection of articles the following topics are covered: (1) minority women and the women's movement; (2) American Indian women; (3) understanding the Chicana (Mexican Americans); (4) black women, their problems and strengths; (5) Japanese American women and their perspective on liberation; and (6) new directions for ensuring equality for minority women. (JD)

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Multicultural Education: Teaching About Minority Women



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TEACHER
EDUCATION

Multicultural Education:
Teaching About Minority Women

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FOREWORD

This eighth in the series of Special Current Issues Publications (SCIPs) treats the convergence of two pernicious social maladies--racism and sexism--and suggests implications for teacher education efforts to mitigate these ills. The minority woman is victimized because of both her sex and her ethnicity. Often, indeed, she is forced to come to grips with internal conflicts generated when she accepts an active part in the two liberation movements: whereas feminists strive toward goals articulated by Anglo leaders, cultural distinctions may very well dictate other priorities for minority women.

The authors of this monograph view both of these social struggles from the unique perspectives of their individual ethnic contexts. Clearly, racism and sexism are seen as dual barriers to be overcome by the concerted energies of both men and women of all ethnic groups. To that end, teacher education programs must incorporate strategies to instill sensitivities--and practical techniques--for effecting social change.

The authors are well qualified to speak to these concerns:

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The Clearinghouse is grateful to these authors for their contributions to this publication. Reader reactions or suggestions are welcome.

Karl Massanari
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MINORITY WOMEN AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

ANN M. SCHLITT

The intent of this discussion is to help teacher educators more effectively present information about minority women, primarily to non-minority students. A teacher education program that incorporates a multicultural component, or has an integrated approach, is necessary to make education relevant to all people in a culturally diverse society.

Multicultural education, as viewed by the writers, is education that will prepare individuals to recognize, understand, and appreciate the culturally diverse nature of this country. From our perspective, a multicultural approach differs from a multiethnic one. Multiethnic education focuses primarily on content unique to specific ethnic groups. Multicultural education is more inclusive, in that its broad interpretation of "cultural group" allows for the study of all groups in the United States. It is an encompassing approach to education based on the notion that group-related issues and problems can best be understood when the ethnic components and experiences are considered within the framework of the larger cultural group.

More specifically, women comprise a cultural group; therefore, a study of the women's movement falls under the domain of multicultural education and multicultural teacher education. Because the study of women is appropriate from the multicultural perspective, it becomes important to explore the differences and similarities based on ethnicity that exist among women. It is also imperative to note that there is as much diversity within an ethnic group as there is between groups.

A distinctive feature of U.S. history has been the parallel between racism and sexism, both acting to relegate minorities and women to a secondary status in our society. The minority woman is caught in a double bind: she is the victim of both racist and sexist behaviors. A woman's response to the struggle against racism and sexism may be shaped in part by her ethnicity. Issues such as political participation, elimination of discrimination, equal pay for equal work, reproductive choice, child care, equal educational opportunities, media images, and economic opportunities take on different levels of priority. For instance,

Chicana activist Consuelo Nieto sees support from many Chicanas as the women's movement relates to equity in pay and job opportunities. "Yet for some, particularly the non-activists, the closer the movement comes to their personal lives, the more difficult it becomes to tear themselves away from the kinds of roles they have filled."¹

Some women see the struggle for racial equality as their primary concern. Many Native American women believe their total efforts must be directed toward improving the status of Indians as a people. Minerva White, a Seneca, said, "We have had women's liberation for five thousand years . . . and so that is not an issue for us."² Other women view the movement for equal opportunity and the right of self-determination as compatible goals for all women.

The study of feminism or women's liberation can be meaningful only if it is multicultural. It must recognize the need for positive images and self-concepts for all women and allow for the expression and appreciation of the diverse cultures that make up our society.

This monograph contains succinct observations about Chicana, Native American, black American, and Japanese-American women from the perspective of each writer. Each has a unique message shaped in part by her ethnicity and culture. Implications for teacher education are provided at the end of each discussion.

The final section considers the viewpoints presented and explores considerations for teacher education as they relate to the needs of minority women. General guidelines are suggested to assist in the establishment and development of teacher education programs that reflect multicultural approaches and content.

¹ Consuelo Nieto. "The Chicana and the Women's Rights Movement." Civil Rights Digest 6 (3): 36-42; Spring 1974.

² Quoted by Alice Sargent, in an unpublished paper, "Sex Role Issues for Minority Women."

AMERICAN INDIAN WOMEN

KATHLEEN A. HUNTER

There is no American Indian woman. There are Sioux women or, more specifically, Oglala Sioux women. There are Pueblo women or, more specifically, Isleta Pueblo women. And so on. Because identification with one's tribe is the fundamental awareness for American Indian people, self-concept is intimately associated with tribal concept. For Indian women this means their role expectations are modified by the tribal perception of a woman's role.

Vine Deloria, Jr., a Standing Rock Sioux lawyer, has explored the essential relationship of place to tribal religions and communities. In the book, God Is Red, he argues that the basic determiner and strength of a community and its religion is the space in which it has come into existence--not the time of its events. "American Indians hold their lands--places--as having the highest possible meaning, and all their statements are made with this reference point in mind."³ Therefore, tribal life will be realized differently in different environments. We should assume that tribal role expectations of women will adapt as well. The large western reservations, the isolated rural settlements, and the urban centers will each nurture a value system and body of customs appropriate to that place.

In some instances, sex differentiation within a tribe is clear and controlled by law and custom. Many tribes, such as the Iroquois, Pueblo, and Cherokee, are matrilineal societies. The customs and traditions which facilitate and protect matrilineal organizations will reflect the unique cultural values and experiences of the tribe. While matrilineal societies provide us with a dramatic example of differing role expectations for Indian women, within each tribe there are sex role designations which are subtle and exclusive. For example, Indian grandmothers enjoy a respect and affection unique to their role.

Contemporary American Indian experience dictates a complex coexistence of protection for ancient tribal values and customs and utilization of necessary technological innovations. An Indian woman, trying to hold on to tribal

³ Vine Deloria, Jr. God Is Red. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1975. p. 75.

life, must realize her meaning and significance within this stressful context. As we risk some generalizations about these women and their life styles, we are not suggesting absolutes. What are presented are points of reference and a way of comparing the role expectations of some Indian women with non-Indian women.

THE COMMUNAL WOMAN

Individual achievement, personal rights, and control over one's own body are values of the women's rights movement. The New Woman's individualism is partly modeled on American male independence and capitalistic economics; it is also a response to the unhappy repressive nature of women's communal experiences. Placing women into groups has had more to do with control of property than a positive sanction of womanly responsibility and power. The "coming together of women" is a fearful and anxiety-producing event for American men, who see such gatherings as threatening their exclusive control and ownership of women.

Communal identity and individual identity are almost inseparable for Indian women who value their culture. In God Is Red, Deloria explains that the tribal community is a living presence as much as the individual. Neither the person nor the community is diminished by the other, but rather each is realized and enriched through the other. This relationship should not be seen as repressive of personality; the person, seeking a way of living in the world, is honored and respected. The worth of the community is to support the vision of self and to provide a context in which the person can actualize identity.

The conflict between individualism and communalism will create a hardship for the tribal woman. She may not respond to the same motivational forces as the non-Indian woman. In fact, she may even find herself having to cope with guilt and alienation should she attempt to pursue an individualistic approach to her life.

THE GENTLE WOMAN

Power and strength have different significance for Indian women than for non-Indian women. For a collection of unpublished poems, Dr. Robert K. Thomas, Cherokee scholar,

has written a poem entitled, "Where Have All the Tender Young Women Gone?"⁴ Thomas explores the loss of gentleness which has accompanied the exposure and activism of modern women. The quality of tenderness which Thomas perceives is not weakness, but rather a gentle free yielding of a powerful Earth. Earth is the essential nurturing core of life: it is strong and independent, and moves by principles which must not be violated. It can be fierce in its protectivism and awful in its retribution. For a reality this powerful to raise up life as delicate as sweet grass, as corn, as laurel, is truly an act of gentleness. In like manner, a tribal woman can be a gentlewoman, not out of weakness or as a gesture of submission, but as a statement of recognized strength and essential value.

Thus strength and power are not qualities which need to be wrestled away from unguarded men, but rather are intrinsic to the nature and role expectations of Indian women. When these women meet to discuss women's rights, it is assumed that they do have rights. The concern is how to exercise their responsibilities of leadership in keeping with their cultural values while developing and maintaining maximum effectiveness in a non-Indian society. Within the communal ecology it is essential that each member discover his or her power, and that this power be understood and used to sustain the life of all.

THE WHOLE WOMAN

Women's magazines devote their pages to helping the New Woman to be and to stay organized. Like the magazine itself, a woman is seen as a series of Departments: The Professional Woman, The Beautiful Woman, The Sexual Woman, The Healthy Woman, The Maternal Woman, and so on. Womanhood is not a role in itself, but a composite of roles. Magazine articles suggest that a woman should have two goals: (a) to know and perform each of these roles with perfection, and (b) to keep the roles discrete and unconfused. There are appropriate clothing, makeup, hairdos, and perfumes to go with each role to help keep them straight.

Now and then the magazines will rescue their readers with a consoling article on the difficulty of managing all of

⁴ By permission of the author, Dr. Robert K. Thomas, Wayne State University.

this. Tips are provided on how to get it all together: mix-and-match clothes that will get you through the whole day, casseroles for the working wife, isometrics for the professional woman. This is a lot like a good American garden with its fields of beans and fields of corn carefully planted side by side, draining the soil's nutrients. Again, the Earth provides the appropriate metaphor for the impossible situation in which American women find themselves. They have become an economic commodity valued in terms of productivity. When they are finally depleted, what parts of themselves will end in "soil banks" for regeneration?

American Indian people see the person as they see the Earth: a single interrelating system which must be understood as a whole--a circle. Like the sun, the moon, the seasons, and the directions, all things return to their beginning point, creating the whole. For the tribal woman, each of her experiences has value because it contributes to her sense of wholeness; she does not wish to fracture her life into exclusive components. To each event she carries all that she is as a result of past events. Her choices may differ from those of non-Indian women. Perhaps it will not be important to her to be able to do all things at once. Her goal may not be to say, "Look at all I have been able to do"; this is an economic concept. Her goal may be instead to say, "I want to interact with what I am doing now so that I may become a more total person"; this is a humanistic concept.

INDIAN PARENT COUNCILS

When we examine the actual situation of Indian women, it is obvious that the ancient values are struggling for survival. Like all American Indians, the women are frequently isolated from each other--alone in non-Indian communities, alone in school, alone in the classroom, alone on the job. Little tribal support sustains them and protects them from acculturation. Remembering ideals of tribal cohesiveness, community support, personal vision, and womanly gentleness, the Indian woman confronts a reality of shattering pluralism, isolation, private despair, and aggressive survival strategies. She is often unseen; therefore, there are no expectations for her.

Despite the multitude of handicaps, events indicate the old values will survive. There is a growing renewal of

tribal awareness and a creative adaptation of institutional structures to implement Indian self-determination.

One of the most hopeful movements in contemporary Indian affairs is the establishment of Indian Parent Councils within local school districts. In order to receive federal assistance under the Indian Education Act (ESEA Title IV, Part A, U.S. Office of Indian Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare), school districts must work cooperatively with an Indian Parent Council in the development, implementation, and evaluation of an Indian education program. These councils are not advisory committees, but policy-making bodies which share responsibility with the schools in all aspects of the program.

This innovative self-determination legislation provides legitimacy and status to Indian women in social action roles. Along with husbands, children, and grandparents, they are taking on leadership responsibilities within their communities. The sense of isolation is decreasing. An Indian woman may travel ten or twenty miles with her family for the monthly Parent Council meeting. At a given meeting, she might help the other Council members with a potluck supper, listen to a presentation on Indian Rural Health from the state coordinator, and help her mother teach the children beadcraft. She might vote with other members on whether to take their children to the statewide Indian Student Career Day, or whether to renew the teaching contract of the Indian cultural history teacher.

The councils are becoming the impetus for a renewed tribalism in which women of all ages are playing significant roles. Equally important, however, school district personnel are gaining a changed image of Indian women, with whom they will need to contend. These women are strong willed, and determined never again to relinquish their right to sustain and protect the values of their people.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Educators seeking to enrich the school curriculum and prepare sensitive teaching personnel would do well to begin their efforts right at home in cooperation with regional Parent Councils and Indian Centers. In the design of a teacher education program responsive to the American Indian

cultural values and patterns for women, at least four principles should guide decisions:

1. Educators must become sensitive to fundamental tribal characteristics which result from cultural values and historical experiences.
2. Teacher educators must prepare teachers planning to work with Indian female students to structure school activities which will support rather than violate community loyalties and collective activity.⁵
3. School personnel need to recognize that aggressiveness and assertiveness are not the only measures of strength, determination, or ability and that the quiet manner of an Indian female student possibly reflects its own courage and capacity.
4. Young Indian women have the awareness to teach the teachers that the quality of human experience and activity has greater total value than the more easily measured tasks usually presented students.⁶

⁵ This author has spoken with several school administrators who are concerned about school failure of Indian female students. While sports programs may hold young Indian men, there are no adequate communal experiences to hold Indian women in school.

⁶ An excellent discussion on this subject appears in: "USOE Task Force Report on Native American Instructional Strategies," Instructional Strategies in Schools with High Concentrations of Low-Income Pupils. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1976.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHICANA

Isabel Salas

Now that multicultural education is finally gaining wide attention in the United States, social scientists and educators are attempting to understand the values and cultural characteristics of minority groups. Some of that attention has focused on minority women. In the case of Mexican-American women, or Chicanas as we prefer to call ourselves, there are two distinct views: one is the Anglo view, which is scientific; the other is the Chicana view, which is humanistic.

THE ANGLO VIEW

Widely publicized generalizations of Chicanas stop short of an accurate and full description for two reasons. First, analysis of research findings has been from a predominantly Anglo point of reference.⁷ Second, behavioral responses stemming from cultural stipulations are misunderstood. As a result, Chicanas are stereotyped as passive, resigned, and submissive women. Most maligned is the Chicano value system which is considered to be the cause of such behavior. No doubt a group's value system determines, among other things, its behavioral patterns. Distortions, however, are inevitable when polar sets of values are superimposed. Catholic collectivism, cooperation, and mutual dependence, values highly esteemed by Chicanas, cannot be properly interpreted using a frame of reference based on Protestant individualism, competition, and independence.⁸

Chicanas reject these stereotypes. As members of the group in question, we need only observe how our grandmothers, our mothers, and the women in our communities actually behave in their daily lives. Passivity, submissiveness, and resig-

⁷ Octavio Romano. "The Anthropology and Sociology of the Mexican American." In: O. Romano, ed. Voices. Berkeley, Calif.: Quinto Sol Press, June 1971.

⁸ Manuel Ramirez and Alfredo Castaneda. Cultural Democracy, Bicoognitive Development, and Education. New York: Academic Press, 1974.

nation are not the outstanding characteristics we remember. Strength, determination, and endurance are more accurate descriptors.⁹ Admittedly, the Chicano culture imposes secondary status on women. Early female socialization instills passive-submissive behavior. Rural isolation maximized it in the past, but urbanization has reduced it drastically. Urban Chicana behavior is a mixture of cultural traditions and American adaptations. It is, more and more, a melding of two cultures.

Distortions persist because distinct types of behavior are not recognized by outsiders. Just as the Spanish language contains a formal and a familiar manner of speaking, so does the Chicano culture prescribe formal and informal behavior. Speaking to people in formal situations, such as work, church, school, or business, requires the use of "usted" (you). The familiar pronoun "tu" (you) is used with family and friends sharing the same social status. Formal behavior for formal occasions is prescriptive public behavior. Informal behavior is actual daily behavior. Cultural norms reinforce formal behavior, how group members ought to behave. Chicanas may be vocal and assertive with their husbands at home, but in public they behave as they should.

Contrast the public behavior of the Chicana and the Anglo woman. It is not uncommon to hear an Anglo woman tell her husband to "shut up" in public. Chicanas wait for a private moment to do so, and undoubtedly choose other words. Anglos interpret this type of response as submissive; Chicanas see it as proper formal behavior in a public situation. Actual daily behavior, on the other hand, is shaped by the needs of the family. "La familia" is the most important institution. The woman is the heart of the family. Familial responsibilities accelerate the Chicana's departure from passive-submissive behavior.

A SELF VIEW

The evolution of Chicana characteristics can be divided into three stages: the Passive-Submissive, the Becoming Independent, and the Independent.

⁹ Isabelle Navar. "La Mexicana: An Image of Strength." Regeneración (Los Angeles, Calif.) 2 (4): Special Issue on Chicanas, 1975.

As daughter, and later as young wife, the Chicana does pass through a passive-submissive stage. From childhood the female child is taught to be obedient, respectful, industrious, virtuous, and religious. The expectation is that she will integrate these values and adhere to them throughout life. The very same values, except for virtue, are taught to the Chicano son. In adolescence, the daughter is protected, sheltered, and confined. Unlike the Anglo family, the Chicano family does not equalize social privileges as the son and daughter grow older. Marriage promises more of the same; restrictive authority is transferred from the parents to the husband.

Major responsibilities related to managing the home and educating the children are assumed in the second stage. The Chicana must break out of the passive-submissive mold. Rural residence affords few opportunities to do so, but in the city each outing exposes her to the outside world. Each experience provides contact with other people and other women, each is a learning situation. These familial responsibilities transform the Chicana into a very strong woman. Passivity becomes activity. Moreover, each achievement increases her self-confidence and intensifies her quest for independence. Outwardly, the Chicano husband remains the dominant figure; privately, he is surrendering familial authority to his wife. Contrary to popular belief, most Chicanas do not settle into a life of continued male domination. A great amount of independence is needed and gained by the second stage. And male domination is being challenged further by the growing number of Chicanas entering the job market.

By stage three, Chicanas are the recipients of special treatment from both male and female members of their families and their group. The grandmother's wisdom is sought and respected. She is revered and loved for her performance as nurturing mother and enduring, loyal wife. And she may be as independent as she wishes to be.

If Chicanas are all seen as passive and submissive it is because, regardless of their age or status, they continue to behave publicly according to the norms of their culture.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

The basic conflict between Chicanas and the women's liberation movement lies in attitudinal differences toward

sexism. The women's movement insists that women, regardless of cultural affiliations, have the same problems and will respond in the same manner.¹⁰ Sexism is the major concern of the women's movement. It is of great concern to minority women as well, but their responses differ.

Chicanas make distinctions between the sexism of the dominant culture and the sexism of the subculture. Anglo women are hostile toward men. Chicanas are hostile toward Anglo men (and women), but not toward their own men. The Chicano male is a partner in the struggle for racial equality; one does not turn against a comrade. The Chicana recognizes and is attempting to change the sexist attitudes, beliefs, customs, and roles in her subculture, but her tactics and strategies will differ from those employed in dealing with the sexism and racism encountered in the Anglo world.

A collective approach to women's liberation is preferred by Chicanas when they deal with their own men. Great care is taken not to destroy the spirit of collectivism, cooperation, and mutual dependence which is ingrained through cultural socialization. The women's movement has an individualistic approach: liberation for the self regardless of the disruptions of the marital relationship or the family. This stance is consistent with the Anglo value system, but to expect all women to take the same stance has been the greatest misjudgment of the women's movement. We are all women. Women may all have the same problems, but each group of women responds to these problems according to the value systems, collective and individual, of its constituent women.

MULTICULTURAL TEACHER EDUCATION

Knowing and understanding the cultural values to which Chicanas adhere is an essential ingredient for multicultural teacher education. Learning about their culture not only is important for those who are planning to work with Chicanas, but is perhaps even more crucial for those teachers who will

¹⁰ Evey Chapa. "Report from the National Women's Political Caucus." Magazine (San Antonio, Tex.) 1 (9): 37-39; September 1973.

be teaching about them. Once basic information is grasped, then and only then is it possible for teachers to plan curricular content that is appropriate for students. Equally important is the necessity to help prospective teachers develop appropriate and relevant instructional techniques and strategies. One technique which is popular is the cross-cultural approach which compares and contrasts the cultural characteristics of different groups of minority women. The teacher's role is to create an accepting and understanding atmosphere as students examine what socialization and behavioral patterns Chicana, Puerto Rican, Asian, Native American, Black, and Anglo women have in common. Where do basic differences occur? What are the behavioral implications of these differences? No group is omitted. Each member of a minority or ethnic group is invited to participate.

Multicultural education requires commitment on the part of all educators. Commitment to equality and the recognition of cultural diversity should be evident in staffing patterns, in counseling procedures, and in all other aspects of the educational program. An educational program that reflects cultural diversity at all levels and in a total way is one that can best provide multicultural education.

TO KNOW BLACK WOMEN

GWENDOLYN C. BAKER

To learn about and to teach about black women is to put aside previous stereotypes and to see us as we truly are. Robert Hill, in Strengths of Black Families, discusses five strengths: strong kinship bonds, strong work orientation, adaptability of family roles, high achievement orientation, and religious orientation.¹¹ These strengths cannot be adequately considered without some investigation of the role of the black woman in their development. Contrary to many perceptions of the black woman in relation to the black family, the pattern of family life developed not because the role of the black woman was that of a matriarch, but because of the unique roles that both black men and women had to assume. As Hollie I. West stated in the Washington Post review of Herbert G. Gutman's latest book, The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925, "Despite family breakup and separation, family structure grew and stayed alive and cultural patterns formed."¹²

Black women, partly through adjustment and adaptation to an unjust system, developed the ability and compassion for caring for young children and the elderly by absorbing them into their households at whatever the physical or economic costs. Hence we find the development and perpetuation of an extended family relationship. In the absence of formal adoption agencies, an informal adoption network functioned to tighten kinship bonds. The black woman provided a strong link in the development of this strength.

In most black families, women and men work together and place a strong emphasis upon work and ambition.¹³ Historically, black women have not been chained to their own kitchens, but rather through necessity have worked outside the home. The development of the black middle class gave rise to

¹¹ Robert B. Hill. Strengths of Black Families. New York: Emerson Hall Publisher, 1971.

¹² Hollie I. West. "The Black Family: A New Perspective." Washington Post, December 1976.

¹³ Hill, p. 9.

an expanded partnership between the black female and the black male--the privilege to pursue a career was hers.

There is a high degree of equality in the black family. Family patterns appear to be egalitarian, with little attention to specific role definition. Men and women assume each other's roles as needed. Therefore, role diversity is not a need of black families.

Black women value achievement and can be considered not only as achievers but also as those who have encouraged the notion of "education as the hope for the future of Blacks." Unfortunately, society has not supported this strength, and there has been little upward gain on the economic ladder for black women.

Firm religious convictions have supplied hope to black families. Black women, as active participants in church related activities, have long been involved and are highly respected.

To know black women is to recognize and acknowledge their strengths:

To illustrate, women or the feminist movement may be explored, but the full impact of this movement will be ignored completely unless we consider the interest, concerns, and responses to the issues involved by women of various ethnic groups. The values and interests a Black, Native American, or Chicano woman places on the feminist movement are quite different from those of a white middle-class woman. The differences in perspectives and/or responses are primarily due to the ethnic experiences each has had in this country.¹⁴

A UNIFIED MOVEMENT

Perhaps the most essential instrument for combatting the divisive effects of a black-only or feminist-only movement is the voices of black women insisting on the unity of civil rights for minorities and women. Only a broad movement for human rights, via multicultural education in the schools, can

¹⁴ Gwendolyn C. Baker. "Cultural Diversity: Strength of the Nation." Educational Leadership 33 (4): 257-60; January 1976.

prevent black revolution from becoming isolated and can ensure its success as well as success in eliminating sexism.¹⁵

Black women differ; there is no monolithic concept of the black woman, but there are many models. However, there is a common denominator, a common strand of history that characterizes all black women: oppression.¹⁶

No matter how much we celebrate our culture and its heroes, we must still do the necessary activist work to eliminate oppression. Cultural nationalism can never be a total substitute for direct political involvement.¹⁷

Therefore, as Pauli Murray discusses in "The Liberation of Black Women," involvement in the struggle against racism and sexism necessitates a dual approach:

Traditionally, racism and sexism in the U.S. have shared some common origins, displayed similar manifestations, reinforced one another, and are so deeply intertwined in the country's institutions that the successful outcome of the struggle against racism will depend in large part upon the simultaneous elimination of all discrimination based upon sex.¹⁸

One approach that appears to be an appropriate attempt to combat the forces of racism and sexism may be found in the concept of multicultural education. A multicultural curriculum acknowledges the differences that exist between and within ethnic groups and includes these differences in the exploration of larger groups, cultures, and issues.

Responsibility for helping to eliminate racial misunderstandings and for creating an environment of equality has been

15 Pauli Murray. "The Liberation of Black Women." J.: Jo Freeman, ed. Women: A Feminist Perspective. Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1975. p. 363.

16 Joyce Ladner. Tomorrow's Tomorrow: The Black Woman. New York: Doubleday and Co., 1971. p. 18.

17 Ladner, p. 273.

18 Murray, p. 351.

placed on the education system. The 1954 decision in the case of Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka was a beginning toward the desegregation of schools. Incorporating ethnic studies into the curriculum is a more recent attempt toward integration of instructional content. Then the need for eliminating existing racist and sexist behavior in our schools became a priority; in this regard, Title IX has become the password of the day.

Unfortunately, efforts to eradicate racism and sexism have, up to now, remained fairly separate movements; little has been done to develop an approach that will do both. As a result, endeavors formerly aimed at the elimination of racism have been curtailed, if not abandoned, in most schools, and the efforts toward elimination of sexist behavior are increasing. As one movement appears to be on the decline and the other on the upsurge, minorities--especially minority females--have been lost in the shuffle. The battle to eliminate sexism has been based on the assumptions that all women are the same and that all want the same changes. How inaccurate these assumptions are; to consider the plight of black women and other minority women the same as that of all other women is to assume in error.

The Black woman suffers from the twin burden of being Black and female. Her life is shaped by the subjugated statuses which are assigned to being a woman and being Black, both of which carry with them a double jeopardy.¹⁹

Black females are different because historically their involvement in the development of this country has been different; they are treated differently and they feel different. Other minority women have experienced similar treatment and feel much the same way as black women do.

EDUCATION FOR DIVERSITY

Because racism and sexism have parallel concerns and origins, it is mandatory that efforts to eliminate such behavior and attitudes in schools take a combined approach to the problem.

¹⁹ Ladner, p. 277.

Multicultural education--particularly as it relates to teaching about minority women, and specifically about black women--can be effective only if educators recognize that:

1. Teacher education programs must provide students an opportunity to learn about the involvement of the black American in the United States. Providing this kind of objective content will help establish a knowledge base that is essential to teachers who will be teaching Blacks and/or about Blacks.
2. An examination and analysis of the various myths and stereotypes about Blacks should be executed in view of historical relevancy--for example, the matriarchal role of the black woman.
3. It is crucial to be aware of those elements of the culture of Blacks that are held in common and those that may differ. This awareness is essential for helping to develop the sensitivity needed to respond to the educational needs of Blacks and, specifically, black females.

JAPANESE-AMERICAN WOMEN: A PERSPECTIVE ON LIBERATION

LINDA J. MURAKISHI

I see women's liberation as meaning advocacy for the advancement of women, both personally and professionally. As such, women's liberation implies that women of all races join on common ground against a shared form of discrimination. For instance, we feel the impact of sexism, as other generations of Japanese-American women felt the sexism of patriarchal Japanese men, described in Emma Gee's historical essay, "Issei: The First Women."²⁰ Gee relates how many Japanese immigrant women were burdened with the double task of working beside their husbands in the family enterprise while raising a family and keeping house. This experience is also common in the male-dominated culture. A patriarchal cultural structure is not the sole property of the Japanese-American immigrants.

A collection of essays, poems, and historical viewpoints entitled Asian Women takes the modern stance that sexism among Asian-American males in the Asian-American "movement" need to be enlightened concerning their dominance of many activities.²¹ But nowhere in that collection of writings is it stated that men are a monolithic group. Asian-American men share with Asian-American women a history that has bound them together under racism. The women's liberation movement is based on the perception of men as a monolithic group, but the experience of Asian-American women has unified them with Asian-American men. And as I cannot ignore this bond, I cannot ignore the strength of shared identity and unity which comes with it. In Third World Women, a collection of articles by minority women, it is evident that out of a common identity that celebrates the unity of Third World men and women comes a self-acceptance which is positive and rewarding.²²

²⁰ Emma Gee. "Issei: The First Women." In: Asian-American Studies Center. Asian Women. Los Angeles: University of California, 1975. p. 11.

²¹ Asian-American Studies Center. Asian Women. Los Angeles: University of California, 1975.

²² In: Third World Women. San Francisco: Third World Publications, 1972. pp. i-ii.

WOMEN AND MEN TOGETHER

In light of my perception of the unity between Asian-Americans, it is not a contradiction to state that I am alienated from the women's liberation concept while acknowledging that sexism exists within and outside my Japanese-American subculture. I am alienated from a women's liberation concept that advocates for women alone while ignoring the needs of minority men, whose needs for advocacy are as great as those of women. Because I share a strong identity with other Asian-American people, I cannot ignore the racism we face as people of color, both male and female. Liberation from sexism is only part of the liberation needed by all minority people. There is a need for freedom from artificial limits determined by a person's obvious physical and sexual characteristics. My identity with Asian-Americans and other Third World people expands my concept of liberation past the liberation of women alone.

Socialization as a Japanese-American submerged in a larger culture has strengthened my identity with other Asian-Americans. When the first Asian woman set foot in America, she found a culture that glorified women with "white characteristics." "Asian Images--A Message to the Media" describes the socialization of Asians as negative to a large extent.

Governmental and educational institutions, advertising and public relations agencies, newspapers, and other public informational organizations (have) often developed and reinforced stereotyped images that perpetuate prejudice and hate toward Asians. . . . For whatever reasons--political, economic, social, comical--these distortions have done much to damage the image of Asian-Americans.²³

This experience is not limited to women; Asian men are also victims of negative racial stereotypes. The perceptions of the majority culture can be very destructive to the individual and the group when accepted without critical analysis.

²³ Asian-Americans for Fair Media Group. "Asian Images--A Message to the Media." Bridge Magazine 3 (2): 31; April 1974.

ACCEPTANCE OF SELF

Angry that negative stereotypes are often accepted by minority people, one Asian-American woman writes critically of an "Asian-American magazine" containing advice for disguising Oriental eyes so that they seem larger.²⁴ This is an example of how it is possible to lose perspective on our Asian/non-majority characteristics and deny qualities so inherently Asian as our physical appearance. Like other minorities, Asian-Americans fight against such illogical and demeaning perceptions of themselves. Our human need to perceive ourselves as worthwhile makes Asian-American men and women accepting and supportive of each other. As a subculture we have values which differ from the larger American culture. Our subcultural values do not contain the negative evaluations of the outsider looking in.

Historical experience with racism has served as another unifying force between Asian-American men and women. An example of the racism which Asian-Americans have experienced is the incarceration of Japanese-Americans during World War II. These desert camps were ostensibly designed to prevent harm from coming to Japanese-Americans through Yellow Peril hysteria, and to contain the fifth column acts of sabotage which disloyal internees were presumed capable of committing. Michi Weglyn, in Years of Infamy, documents recent evidence that shows the evacuees were in actuality considered innocent of such activities by government investigators. She writes,

One of the gross absurdities of the evacuation was that the preponderance of those herded into wartime exile represented babes-in-arms, school-age children, youths not yet of voting age, and an exhausted army of elderly men and women hardly capable of running out and carrying on subversion.²⁵

²⁴ Joan Shigekawa. "Through Jaded Eyes." Bridge Magazine 3 (2): 37; April 1974.

²⁵ Michi Weglyn. Years of Infamy. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1976. p. 42.

But if the camps did not serve the purpose of protecting Americans and democracy, they did accomplish one task very well: the camps taught Japanese-Americans that they were powerless to stop racism from directly affecting their lives.²⁶ This powerlessness unified the Japanese-Americans in the sense that their efforts for liberation were focused outside their racial group. They saw that equality was denied them because of their race, and this made every Japanese-American keenly aware of the common burden both men and women carried. Fighting racism as an individual is pointless because racism blankets an entire group of people, not one person alone. In the same way, exploring sexism as a woman's struggle misses the scope of the oppression; sexism affects all people in its denial of rights for a few. Sexism, when seen in the context of a history of discrimination, is just one more form of discrimination faced by Japanese-Americans.

In essence, all women may share familiarity with sexism, and on that broad commonality build a feeling of solidarity against it. But beyond that broad meeting ground are the differences in attitude which separate many minority women from many women of the majority culture. These differences come from the experiences of history and socialization of different groups. Because racism is faced by all Japanese-Americans without distinctions of male and female, unity and group identity are recognized as tools to combat it. To put aside the effects of racism, Japanese-Americans use this unity and group identity to examine the sources of racism critically and to reject stereotypes destructive to their potential for advancement. With the problem of sexism, the same formula is also applied. Sexism, because it is only one more form of discrimination, can be fought as Japanese-Americans have fought other forms of inequality: by a powerful union of men and women. Asian-American men and women both have traditionally drawn upon each other as sources of positive identity and pride. There is no logic in fighting the men with whom we have stood firm against other forms of oppression.

26 Isao Fujimoto. "The Failure of Democracy in a Time of Crisis." *Gidra* (Los Angeles, Calif.), September 1969. Reprinted in: Amy Tachiki, Eddie Wong, Franklin Odo, and Buck Wong, eds. Roots: An Asian-American Reader. Los Angeles: University of California, 1971. p. 208.

Asian-American and Third World liberation means to me that my daughters will be as free as my sons to express their abilities. I cannot make the choice to advocate the rights of one child over the rights of the other. Many Americans realize that "women are half of the working force in the movement against oppression, exploitation, and imperialism. . . . They must develop as human beings, not subject to categorizations and stereotypes. The struggle is not men against women, nor women against men, but it is a united front striving for a new society, a new way of life."²⁷

TEACHER EDUCATION IMPLICATIONS

Japanese-American history is noteworthy in that it is a history strikingly/mundanelly like the histories of other immigrant groups. The Americanization of and discrimination against immigrants make a deep mark on their psychology; old country values lose their meaning as they alter and blend into new values. This socialization of immigrants is an American theme which ties together the histories of all groups. It ties each student in the class to the past and to the future, because it is an ongoing theme yet to be resolved. Many Japanese-Americans are today very aware of the implications of immigrant status as manifested in discrimination against race, language, and culture. It is necessary to assess those differences in terms of societal acceptance and professional expectations, past and present. Japanese-American history is continuing, and is still influenced by those immigrant differences which have set apart so many other groups.

Japanese-American women must be seen in this greater context of immigrant socialization. They share the racism of their history with Japanese-American men, and both continue to face racism as visible minorities. Majority culture, minority culture--the conflict has produced a crucible in which Japanese-American identity has formed to the exclusion of separate male and female priorities. Freedom from discrimination means that sexism and racism are perceived as

27 "Asian Women as Leaders." Rodan (San Francisco, Calif.) 1 (9); April 1971. Reprinted in: Tachiki and others. Roots: An Asian-American Reader. p. 297.

common adversaries. Wanting acceptance by the majority culture and yet wanting to celebrate their Japanese-American strengths, Japanese-American women often find themselves with priorities and concerns which are different from those of non-minority women. The goals of teacher educators should be to show how these desires for self-acceptance and majority acceptance are often contradictory desires for the Japanese-American woman, and how the fears and lessons of racial discrimination lead her to value unity with Japanese-American men.

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR ENSURING EQUALITY

GWENDOLYN C. BAKER

Each of the foregoing articles gives consideration to the involvement of minority women in the women's movement. The individual authors speak to the unique relationship that exists between their respective ethnic/cultural groups and the focus of the current struggle against sexism. In "Minority Women and the Women's Movement," Ann Schlitt states, "There is as much diversity within an ethnic group as there is between groups"; this idea is further explored by Kathleen Hunter as she points out the tribal and regional differences among American Indian women. In "Understanding the Chicana," Isabel Salas suggests a slightly more uniform approach; but the stages of development discussed indicate that there is also great variety in the thinking and behavior of Chicanas. Linda Murakishi makes the point that the history and socialization of minority women contributes to these differences within groups, and I have emphasized that there is no monolithic concept of the black woman.

In essence, each message reiterates that there is no one model woman, just as there is "No One Model American." That concept, which the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) has advocated for several years, is the idea on which its Multicultural Commission bases all its activity.²⁸

All of the authors seem to agree that the differences which do exist among women are largely cultural in nature, and have been influenced by each group's experiences in this country. These different cultural traits, behaviors, and strengths must be considered and acknowledged not only in the women's movement, but in any activity that concerns all people. Therefore, it is appropriate to think about the preparation of teachers to foster sensitivity to these differences.

Multicultural education is one approach that can be used to acknowledge the differences which exist between and within ethnic/cultural groups. It is a method that recognizes cultural diversity in the exploration of larger issues. This

²⁸ "No One Model American." Journal of Teacher Education
24 (4): 264; Winter 1973.

does not mean that commonalities of groups should or can be ignored.

Multicultural education provides for the identification of those behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that are common among and between groups, but at the same time acknowledges the differences that exist. For example, while there are groups of women who seek the freedom to pursue a career, there are also women for whom this is not a need. On the other hand, "equal pay for equal work" will hardly be shunned by any group of women, regardless of their minority affiliation. Economic oppression has been felt by all women and can be thought of as a unifying force in the women's movement. Multicultural education demands that attention be given to the diversity of individuals and groups. Educators and students alike must be sensitive to the needs of a multicultural population in all attempts to free our schools from sexism.

The recognition of cultural diversity through teacher education, preservice and inservice, could have a substantial impact on schools. The following guidelines are multicultural characteristics suggested for teacher education programs:

1. All aspects of teacher education should incorporate acknowledgment, of, recognition of, and exposure to ethnic and cultural diversity.
2. Teacher education should provide training that will help the preservice student and the inservice teacher perceive differences as positive cultural variants.
3. The main focus of multicultural teacher education should be on the ethnic/cultural groups within the United States, and should include the international perspective only when it can be significantly related.
4. Training should be provided to prepare educators who will be able to develop instructional techniques, strategies, and materials that will support multicultural concepts.

As affirmed in the AACTE Multicultural Commission statement, "No One Model American":

Colleges and universities engaged in the preparation of teachers have a central role in the positive development of our culturally pluralistic society. If cultural pluralism is to become an integral part of the educational process, teachers and personnel must be prepared in an environment where the commitment to multicultural education is evident. Evidence of this commitment includes such factors as a faculty and staff of multi-ethnic and multiracial character, a student body that is representative of the culturally diverse nature of the community being served, and a culturally pluralistic curriculum that accurately represents the diverse multicultural nature of American society.²⁹

Multicultural education can pave the way for ensuring the involvement of minority women in the elimination of sexism. It is also a means by which we can ensure truly effective educational programs. Teacher education has a responsibility it cannot afford to ignore.

²⁹ Ibid.